

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claim 26, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

1. (Previously Presented) A display unit comprising image displaying means having pixels arranged two-dimensionally, plate-shaped illumination means having fine light-emitting points arranged two-dimensionally corresponding to the pixels and being placed on the backside of the image displaying means, and fine optical elements for introducing light emitted from the fine light-emitting points, which are arranged two-dimensionally corresponding to the pixels, to the respective pixels,

wherein the pixels, the fine optical elements and the fine light-emitting points are arranged so that optical axes connecting the respective fine light-emitting points and the respective fine optical elements corresponding thereto pass through respective pixels corresponding to the fine optical elements and the fine light-emitting points, and the optical axes intersect substantially at a prescribed point within a distance of a near point of vision of an eye from a display face of the image display means, and the fine optical elements form a virtual image of the fine light-emitting points corresponding thereto at a distance longer than a distinct vision distance of the eye from the prescribed point.

2. (Previously Presented) The display unit according to claim 1, wherein a fine optical element is constituted of a refractivity-variable plate-shaped element.

3. (Original) The display unit according to claim 2, wherein the plate-shaped element is a liquid crystal panel element.

4. (Original) The display unit according to claim 1, wherein the plate-shaped illumination means comprises a surface light source, and a barrier means having apertures arranged two-dimensionally corresponding to the pixels and serving as the fine light-emitting points by transmitting the light from the surface light source.

5. (Original) The display unit according to claim 4, wherein the distance L between the display face of the image displaying means and the prescribed point, the size D of the display face, the focus length f of the fine optical element, and the size W of the aperture satisfies the relation:

$$W \leq f \times D / L$$

6. (Original) The display unit according to claim 4, wherein the barrier means is capable of switching a transmission mode to an aperture formation mode to allow the light of the surface light source to pass through the apertures, or to an entire transmission mode, by switching.

7. (Original) The display unit according to claim 4, wherein the barrier means is a liquid crystal panel element.

8. (Previously Presented) The display unit according to claim 6, further comprising a hard switch for switching the transmission mode of the barrier means.

9. (Previously Presented) The display unit according to claim 6, further comprising a sensor for detecting the approach of the face of an observer to the display face of the image display means, wherein the transmission mode of the barrier means is switched in accordance with the detection output of the sensor.

10. (Previously Presented) The display unit according to claim 6, further comprising means for switching inter-connectedly the transmission mode of the barrier means and a displayed content of the image display means inter-connectedly.

11. (Previously Presented) The display unit according to claim 6, further comprising means of switching a displayed content of the image display means, and means of switching the transmission mode of the barrier means.

12. (Previously Presented) A display method, employing the display unit according to claim 6, comprising the steps of:

enabling monocular observation of magnified displayed information from the prescribed point or vicinity thereof by switching the barrier means to the aperture formation mode to allow the light of the surface light source to pass the apertures, and enabling binocular observation of non-magnified information from a distance longer than distinct vision distance from the display face of the image display means by switching the barrier means to the entire transmission mode.

13. (Original) A display instrument, employing the display method according to claim 12.

14-26. (Canceled)